

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Modified Allowable Growth for Dropout  
Prevention

**Annual Report  
2009-2010**

**Iowa Code Section 257.40**

Iowa Department of Education  
Grimes State Office Building  
Des Moines, IA 50319

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State of Iowa  
**Department of Education**  
Grimes State Office Building  
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**CODE CITATION: 257.40 (2) Approval of programs for returning dropouts and dropout prevention.**

Beginning January 15, 2007, the Department shall submit an annual report to the chairpersons and ranking members of the Senate and House Education Committees that includes the way school districts in the previous school year used modified allowable growth approved under subsection 1; identifies, by grade level, age, and district size, the students in the dropout and dropout prevention programs for which the Department approves a request; describes school district progress toward increasing student achievement and attendance for the students in the programs; and describes how the school districts are using the revenues from the modified allowable growth to improve student achievement among minority subgroups.

**Data for FY 2008 (2008-2009 school year)**

For the 2008-2009 school year, 322 school districts applied for and were approved by the School Budget Review Committee (SBRC) to levy a local tax for Dropout Prevention Programs. A total of \$101,821,339 was approved by the SBRC on May 12, 2008, for a projected 125,263 students to be identified as at-risk of dropping out of school. At the end of the modified allowable growth application, there is a Service Summary that districts were asked to complete. It was reported that 96,493 students were actually served at an approximate cost of \$1,055 per student, in addition to other funding sources. The 2008-2009 school year was the first year the Department of Education collected student level data from districts for their total number of identified students who are at-risk (academic, personal-social, career-vocational) and those who are the returning or potential dropouts (four criteria for identification Iowa Administrative Code 281—12.2).

Size of districts by student population:

0 – 299:	40 districts
300 – 599:	95 districts
600 – 999:	78 districts
1,000 – 2,499:	77 districts
2,500 – 7,499:	22 districts
7,500 and above:	10 districts



Districts using the modified allowable growth for dropout prevention used this money to provide programming to increase student achievement and attendance for students involved in these programs. Currently 174 of the 322 districts have been tracking attendance for the identified population for three years or more, 19 districts have tracked the attendance of the identified population for two years, 80 districts for one year and the remaining 49 districts state this will be their baseline year. More districts are interested in Early Warning Systems which will increase a district's ability to identify and provide supports necessary to recover and re-engage students in their education.

The 322 districts using allowable growth were focused on the following:

- Academic supports at the following levels:

Elementary students:	271 districts
Middle/junior high students:	287 districts
High school students:	282 districts
Alternative school students:	157 districts
- Revenues were used to support student achievement in the following ways:
  - Small group reading and math instruction at supplemental and intensive levels;
  - Before and after school tutoring; and
  - Strategy instruction (study skills, listening skills, note-taking, problem solving, decision making)
- Providing personal/social supports at the following levels:

Elementary students:	269 districts
Middle/Junior high students:	274 districts
High school students:	270 districts
Alternative school students:	130 districts
- Using the revenues to improve student personal and social skills in the following ways:
  - Alternative schools and programs, such as a “school within a school”;
  - School based case management services and therapeutic intervention;
  - Advocacy and advisory programs;
  - Ninth grade transition programs; and
  - Service Learning

Districts reported to the state that 21,700 minority students were actually served in dropout prevention programs. The districts with the largest minority enrollment are using their revenues in the following ways:

- Elementary levels incorporate Tier II and Tier III interventions for reading, mathematics and behavior (Tier II and Tier III interventions are those that are done with a targeted or small population of students). This is in addition to what is provided to all students.
- Secondary levels, which include middle school, high school and alternative settings - use Second Chance Reading; English Language Learner (ELL) students receive tutorial time with Spanish-speaking instructional assistants; incorporate credit recovery, component recovery and software programs.
- Professional development focuses on differentiated instruction, focus on building relationships with families to support the students; and on-going professional development.

Districts provide information in the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan regarding how the modified allowable growth will improve achievement for their at-risk students and those identified minority subgroups. For the fall EASIER submission, districts identified 83,264 students as potential or returning dropouts in programs funded by modified allowable growth for dropout prevention compared to 96,493 identified as the number of students actually served with dropout prevention dollars on the service summary report to the state. This was the first year that districts identified students as potential or returning dropouts at an individual student level to enable the department to look at achievement data. However, this data is not available at this time. The goal is, of course, to see an increase in achievement and graduation rates.